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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR APRIL 18-19, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for April 18-19, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

BOLGE / EKSPRES: Adana Mayor Aytac Durak reportedly was furious when a muhtar (headman) allegedly made a request to be immune from a Municipality decision to demolish unauthorized house construction. Durak reportedly denied the request and ordered the demolition of the headman's house immediately.

CUMHURIYET / SABAH (GUNEY) / RADIKAL: A "substantial" quantity of oil reportedly leaked from the BOTAS (Petroleum Pipeline Corporation) pipeline - located three kilometers away from Ataturk Dam in Sanliurfa - and made its way to the Dam, covering the surface of the water with petroleum and allegedly catching on fire. Thanks to the hard work of the firefighters, a catastrophe was avoided. The incident reportedly caused environmental damage, especially to endangered species of turtles, and local people are concerned about the quality of their potable water.

RADIKAL / HURRIYET: In two separate military operations, two members of the MKLP in Ovacik district of Tunceli and a member of the PKK in Omerli district of Mardin were killed. One Turkish soldier was reportedly wounded slightly. Separately, the Mayor of Diyarbakir allegedly used the term "armed Kurdish opposition" (note: referring to the PKK) in a broadcast of pro-PKK Roj TV. He also reportedly said that it would be discriminating among citizens should the Municipality investigate whom is requesting when they receive requests for municipal ambulances to transport bodies to funerals. (Note: this comment is in response to criticism for his having approved the use of municipal ambulances on occasion to transport bodies of alleged terrorists. End note.)

RADIKAL: Hekim Turgut, Hakkari's Provincial Education Director, alleged that threats against his life have been made by phone since he started filing complaints against contractors who built the schools that were seriously damaged during the January 25 earthquake.

RADIKAL / OZGUR GUNDEM: One child died and two were wounded when they handled an explosive they found as they were grazing their sheep in an open field close to a military station in Patnos district of Van.

HURRIYET / OZGUR GUNDEM: A seven-year-old girl was reportedly found raped, tortured and wounded in a Diyarbakir street. The victim was hospitalized in Dicle University's Research Hospital and the police are trying to find the criminal with the help of fingerprints found on the girl's body.

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